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[2009 February 16: typed, edited & checked against MS by IB]

Vida Bunbury to Aubrey Hall, 20 August 1940

Marybrook House

August 20th 1940

My dear Aubrey

I was delighted to have your letter a few days ago as I had intended writing after sending the wire & when I looked for your letter could not find it & so far have not been able to do so.

Thank you so much for all you have done about the dog, I really would have liked a well trained dog to take our dear old dog's place as she is getting very old. I don't think a puppy would be any good to me as I have not anyone who can train a dog well & they must be very well trained. I have a very nice young dog now but she will not go near the boy we have as he doesn't treat her properly.

I found your letter so very interesting as I know of all the people you mention. Mrs Strode-Hall was a friend of my mother's, she used to stay at Davilack when she was a girl & knew all the Mannings very well. She met one of the men Mannings & Mrs Strode-Hall years & years afterwards & they were very thrilled in their talks. She was very fond of all the Mannings. Mother also knew all the Bickleys & used to stay there also when she was a girl. She often spoke of them & a glass house built in Fremantle I think.

Mrs C Y O'Connor must be very old too. I heard of her lately when her grand-daughter Francie O'Connor was here staying with Marjorie. She is Frank O'Connor's third daughter & has just married Algy [? McDaniel] I see. Her photo was in the paper last week I think. Nan the eldest daughter travelled from England when Corry came also Mary Henn, they all chummed up & I met them all with her at the Royal Show just after she returned. Mary Henn is the daughter of Canon Henn you mention & has since married Alan Kopje, or some name like that, he is managing a station I think. You must know all about him.

Did you know Rod O'Connor? He was a brother of Frank's & was a friend of ours, he used to spend his weekends at Cundenup at the time I was married, he was an engineer & was killed in the Great War. A very fine looking young man.

I can remember Meta Foss before she was married, she came down to Bridgetown for the show week years & years ago. Then I think there were two other Foss girls who used to come, they must have been the other family. I cannot remember their names. I remember them because someone, I think Frank Venn, used to say I was like one of them.

My mother used to talk of the Riddleys, she seemed to know so many people although she lived so far away. One married Tom Brockman didn't she?

Archie knew Mr & Mrs Foss when he was at Williambury.

I can also remember Mrs Ernest Lee Steere when she was Biddy O'Connor, she used to come to Busselton in the summer holidays & came to a party the night at the Backhouses where I was staying. It is all so many years ago, nearly like a dream. Years afterwards I had a nurse who had just nursed Mrs C & told me quite a lot about the family.

I am glad to hear all the young people's news too, it is very nice to keep in touch with them. I am also pleased to hear Cousin Ernest has had rain, what a bad time he has had for years. Poor Winnie too, it is very bad luck to be so ill.

I cannot understand why Uncle Godfrey did not answer your letter. I shall try to do some-thing to help. I will find out what I can from the other members of the family, I am sure they would be interested. Kitty Hester has [?Willmott] & I know her very well so I will get her to do something with the others. Uncle Godfrey & Aunt Mary are getting very old & most probably have forgotten.

Just imagine anyone being alive who remembers our great-grandparents. I did not take that in although I knew Mrs Strode-Hall was a great age.

All my family are married now. Dorothy is [?near] Busselton & seems very content. She has just built a new comfortable house but has not got into it yet. Mervyn is with me. Marjorie is at Bruce Rock & seems very comfortably settled. Norman Malcolm is in Elders & seems a very nice young man. I miss them very much although I can speak to Dorothy every day or nearly every day on the telephone. Vernon is settled in a cottage not far away. Corry & her family are at Cookernup near Harvey. She has a summer cottage in Busselton & comes down in the hot weather.

I have been reading *The Spanish Bride* Georgette Heyer, it is a new book in our library & I was fortunate to get it early. The story of Wellington's European wars & quite a number of his officers etc come into it. I was particularly thrilled when I discovered Col Molloy came into it with the rest. It is a fascinating story in spite of all the horrors of the battles. Sir Harry Smith & his Spanish bride are [?foremost] in the story.

What is most interesting to me is that I have amongst Col Molloy's old papers letters from his brother officers to him, Col Barnard & Sir Harry Smith are amongst them. I don't quite know the best way of preserving them. I wish you could see these old things, you would be very interested I am sure.

It has been very fine down here this winter so far, but today has completely changed & the rain & wind have come, so we need not worry about rain again I do not think.

I have written to Eva again. I am really ashamed of myself with regard to her as she is so good at answering letters & is such a dear. Now dear Aubrey, hope we shall meet again before too long. The next time you come down do not forget your relations & give us a little of your time.

I do hope you have had rain, you did not say in your last letter. Write to me sometimes if you can find time. Thank you again for all you have done & the very kind thought.

I am your affectionate cousin

Vida